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**Wisconsin at a glance.....**

Wisconsin residents are concerned about the role money plays in politics, according to state specific results from the Belden Russonello & Stewart survey on political reform. The poll found that Wisconsinites' concerns about money and corruption in state government are on par with those for jobs and schools. Furthermore, Wisconsin residents believe that unless the influence of money is limited, elected leaders will not be able to keep their promises on vital state issues.

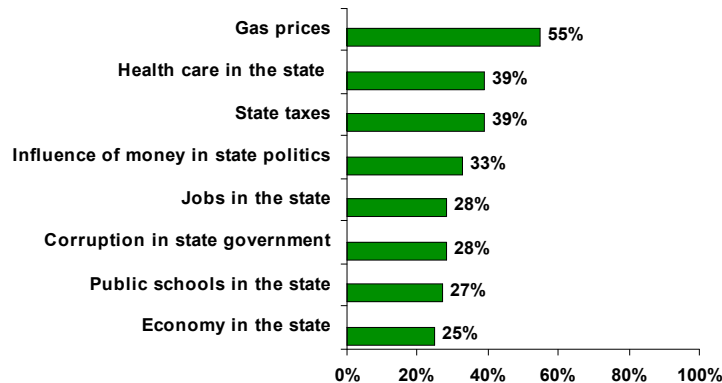
Although they may be frustrated with the current landscape, the survey also shows that Wisconsin residents support reforms designed to make government more honest and responsive. The poll points out that a majority of citizens support specific judicial, special interest, and campaign finance initiatives.

**Below is a summary and comparison of key Wisconsin findings:**

**Wisconsinites are concerned about making state government work better ...**

**Wisconsin Concerns**

% saying 10 – “extremely concerned”



Q. On a scale of one to ten where ten means extremely concerned and one means not concerned at all, how concerned are you personally about each of the following issues in your state: [RANDOMIZE Q6-Q13]

- 12. Gas prices
- 7. Health care in [STATE]
- 13. Jobs in [STATE]
- 10. Public schools in [STATE]
- 11. The influence of money in state politics
- 6. The economy in [STATE]
- 8. Corruption in state government
- 9. State taxes

*Joyce Foundation Survey conducted by Belden Russonello & Stewart, n=2040 residents of 5 Midwestern states (Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin), June 14-July 6, 2006*

### **Connecting the dots...**

74 percent of Wisconsin residents believe that “unless we limit the influence of money in government, elected officials will not be able to keep their promises on issues that are important to people like me.” 43 percent of Wisconsin citizens “strongly agree.”

61 percent of Wisconsin residents feel that candidates who could represent them do not run for office because they do not have the money to win.

### **Citizens are engaged and are not giving up...**

65 percent of Wisconsin residents disagree with the statement that “corruption in government will always be a problem, so trying to fix it will not make much difference.”

### **Reforms widely supported....**

62 percent of Wisconsin residents feel that prohibiting judges from taking money from interests that may have cases in their courts would make a big difference in making government work better.

58 percent of Wisconsin residents believe public financing of campaigns would make a big difference in making government work better.

55 percent of Wisconsin residents feel that requiring lobbyists to fully report their activities would make a big difference in making government work better.

### **Statement from Mike McCabe of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, Jay Heck of Wisconsin Common Cause, and Andrea Kaminski of League of Women Voters of Wisconsin**

Capitol insiders would like us to believe that issues related to money and corruption in state government do not resonate with the public. This poll shows quite the opposite. Today’s findings shows that the people of Wisconsin are deeply concerned about political corruption and are disturbed by how state government is operating. It is also clear that they are eager for change.

Wisconsin was once known for clean and open government, but those days are gone. It is hard to look at these findings and not be struck by the fact that the perceptions of our political culture are now more in line with our neighbors in Illinois than our neighbors to the west in Minnesota. That's a big shift from our traditional self-image.

Still, this poll shows people in Wisconsin haven't given up hope and firmly believe the problem of government corruption can be solved. Wisconsinites

strongly support reforms that have been put forward and they believe that these reforms will make a big difference. Today's findings highlight the disconnect between citizens who want change and political leaders in Wisconsin who have stonewalled reform.

This poll leaves no doubt. The people of Wisconsin want political and government reform. It's time their elected representatives give them what they want and deserve.

(Additional information about the five-state survey as well as reform recommendations for Wisconsin can be found on the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign's web site at [www.wisdc.org](http://www.wisdc.org).)

*The Joyce Foundation Survey was conducted by Belden Russonello & Stewart. A random survey of 2,040 residents of five Midwestern states was conducted from June 14-July 6, 2006. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 2.2 percentage points for the entire study. The margin of sampling error for individual state results is plus or minus 4.9 percentage points.*

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